PRINTERS' ALMSHOUSES, WOOD-GREEN, TOTTENHAM, MIDDLESEX.

THE working printers of the metropolis, as a body, are a thinking, well-informed, and sensible set of men. "Who slays fat oxen" need not "himself be fat," but he who ponders over and communicates the best thoughts of others, possessing too the amount of preparatory education which the occupation requires, may well be expected now and then to get some good thoughts of his own, or at all events to have his comprehension enlarged and his perception sharpened.

It was reasonable to expect that amongst men of this class a desire would grow up to provide for such of themselves as should be stricken by misfortune, a refuge in their old age,—and such was the case. For several years past accordingly a committee has been at work with this object in view. The master-printers approving their intention afterwards lent their aid* (Messrs. Baldwin, Clowes, Cox, Hansard, R. Taylor, and other of our most influential printers, are amongst the subscribers), a plot of ground at Wood Green, Tottenham, has been purchased, and on Monday next the Right Hon. Lord Mahon, M.P., president of the Society of Antiquaries, will lay the first stone of the proposed Asylum.

Connected as we are with printers, and knowing, moreover, that they are eminently entitled to the consideration of all classes, we feel a pleasure in calling the attention of the public to the claims of this institution.

Annexed we give a view of the proposed building, designed by Mr. Wm. Webb, architect, and which is to be erected by Mr. Roberts, builder, for the sum of 1,750*l.*†

The building is intended to accommodate twelve persons; it is to be in the Tudor style of architecture, and will be effective and picturesque in its character. The foundation-stone will form a large buttress in the centre of the building, under the bow-window, bearing the name of the institution and the arms of Lord Mahon. On the ground-floor of each house two rooms and a scullery will be provided, namely, a sitting-room in front about 12 feet square, a bed-room about 11 feet square, and scullery about 9 feet square, with other conveniences: and the same on the floor above. Each floor will be 10 feet in the clear height. There will be a separate entrance to each person's apartments, the upper floors having their entrance by means of an external gallery with iron railing in front, and steps at each end. This gallery will have the advantage of not only affording separate entrances, but can be used as a terrace for exercise, similar to that on the ground-floor, on which the building will stand elevated about 4 feet. All the doorways on the ground-floor will have a comfortable seat on each side, under cover.

The centre building will contain a large room, with a bow-window and open roof, the latter stained oak colour, to be fitted up and used as a library and general meeting-room. This will be approached by a staircase in the old style, in the tower adjoining. On the right there will be a secretary's or waiting-room, and stairs leading to top of tower, with other conveniences. On the ground-floor will be an open hall, with a lavatory, stores, &c.,—the open hall being used to distribute coals, &c., to the inmates.

The whole of the buildings, front and back, are to be faced with red bricks, with dark-coloured mortar, and Bath-stone dressings (mullions, jambs, quoins, plinths, strings, and copings), and roofed with the Delabole slating, of a greenish colour.

On the other side of the road stands the Fishmongers and Poulterers' Institution, for a similar benevolent purpose, and which was designed by the same architect. The two buildings are separated by the village church, and will, when complete, form a very pretty whole. Each person in this latter institution has a house to himself,—sitting-room and scullery on the ground floor, and bed-room on the first floor; the whole of the principal rooms being in the front.

Confining ourselves, however, to the printers,—a few years ago much stir was made respecting a monument to the memory of William Caxton, as the first English printer, but although many subscriptions were announced, no definite result ensued. Now, here, we think, is an admirable opportunity for the subscribers to that monument to carry out their views. A large plot of ground in front of this institution is unappropriated; it will be devoted to an ornamental arrangement of shrubs, unless the aforesaid subscribers to the monument come to an arrangement for placing a statue of William Caxton in front of the almshouses designed for the needy professors of the "divine art" which he was the means of introducing into England. Or, what would be better still, let the funds subscribed be applied to double the number of almshouses proposed to be built, and endow them as

The Caxton Asylum.

We commend this suggestion to the consideration of all parties concerned.

Our sympathies are enlisted in the cause of the printer, and we shall be glad to be the medium of conveying any subscriptions from our readers, to aid the committee in the prosecution of their object.

* Although not to the extent which may yet be hoped for.

† Our readers will remember that there was a startling difference in the amounts of the tenders sent in by builders.

LONDON ANTIQUITIES AND THE CORPORATION.

I AM sure any lover of antiquities will feel grateful to Mr. Tite for his services in securing for the Guildhall the fragments of Roman vases and other objects found on the site of the new Royal Exchange. I cannot say *museum*, for it would be absurd to dignify a mere cupboard by such a title, or to designate a few cases of relics from a few yards of the great area of the city as "antiquities illustrative of Roman London."

Neither, while I thank Mr. Tite for saving some scraps from the general wreck, can I admit that our citizens have ever been mindful of their antiquities. They never knew aught about them, or cared to know. I am anxious to read the answer to the questions put to Mr. Tite by "A London Antiquary;" and, at the same time, I should like to know whether, within the last few years, a most valuable series of documents relating to the management of the city property by Henry IV. was not sold out of the Guildhall *as waste paper?* Secondly, whether the Common Council did not give up the ancient wall on Tower-hill to be pulled down? And, thirdly, I should like to be informed by Mr. Tite where all the antiquities discovered in making the approaches to new London-bridge are deposited?

Mr. Tite accuses public opinion of wronging the Corporation. Let these three questions be fairly answered, and we shall then be better able to judge whether Mr. Tite or the general voice be correct.

I am also sorry to see the name of Mr. Thomas Lott, F.S.A., omitted in Mr. Tite's *brochure*. To him, and to his dauntless perseverance, is owing the grant of the trifling sum which the corporation have given for this apology for a museum. And, last, not least, how could Mr. Tite avoid mentioning the tesselated pavements discovered near the Royal Exchange, and excavated and deposited in the British Museum by the late Mr. Moxhay, or rather, at his private expense? In fact, every object of ancient art that has been preserved has been saved by individual exertion, and not by any provident care exercised by the corporation,—except, perhaps, the few remains found on the site of the Royal Exchange.

AMOR VERITATIS.

SOLUBLE GLASS.—What is called soluble glass is now beginning to come into use as a covering for wood, and other practical purposes. Some of our clever artisans may like to experiment upon it. It is composed of fifteen parts of powdered quartz, ten of potash, and one of charcoal. These are melted together, worked in cold water, and then boiled with five parts of water, in which it entirely dissolves. It is then applied to woodwork, or any other required substance. As it cools it gelatinizes, and dries up into a transparent colourless glass, on any surface to which it has been applied. It renders wood nearly incombustible.—*New York True Sun.*

RAILWAY JOTTINGS.

THE works on the Direct Northern line, in the neighbourhood of the metropolis, are progressing rapidly towards completion. The line as far as the Caledonian-road, above the Caledonian Asylum, has been excavated, and a bridge is constructed across the railway on a line with the Caledonian-road. Above 100 men are now employed on Copenhagen-fields, under which a tunnel will be formed several hundred yards in length, to the Regent's Canal, passing under Maiden-lane. For this purpose three shafts are in course of formation, at equal distances from each other. Between Holloway-road and the Seven Sisters-road, an embankment is being raised, the materials being supplied from extensive cuttings between Hornsey Wood House and Wood Green. The line after passing under Copenhagen-fields and Maiden-lane, will be taken under the Regent's Canal, and it is intended that the water of the canal shall be carried by an iron viaduct over the railway.——The great tunnel on the Leeds and Thirsk line, under Bramhope-ridge, which has been in progress since November, 1845, is so far completed that a locomotive and train passed through it on Thursday week with some of the Directors, Mr. Bourne, the Company's engineer, and others, among whom were Mr. Bray, the contractor; Mr. Watson, the contractor's engineer; Mr. Champion, the contractor's superintendent of tunnel works; Mr. Naylor, the company's resident engineer; Mr. Thornton, contractor for the Leeds contract, &c. The tunnel was designed originally to be two miles in length, but the 'greasy' nature of the ground has induced its extension 200 yards further. There were nineteen working shafts sunk, besides four permanent ones. Where deepest, almost under Bramhope village, three of the working shafts were sunk, over and above the number originally designed, on account of obstacles to progress arising from an influx of water. The debris is not yet all cleared out, but the whole will be completed during the present month. The interior is being sheathed with galvanized iron where the water oozes out to any extent. This line of railway throughout will be opened in the autumn.——The opening of the Burnley branch of the Lancashire and Yorkshire is retarded by another earth slip at the Holmes Chapel tunnel. This last fall has rendered fruitless the labours of many months. The fall was so sudden that the men had to leave their working implements behind them in escaping with their lives.——It is only of late years, says the *Gateshead Observer*, that Whitsuntide has been much observed at Stockton as a holiday. But the Stocktonians—and, indeed, Englishmen generally—are becoming more of a holiday-making people. Thanks, partly, to the railways, which afford the means of rational, healthful enjoyment—and where should the advantages conferred by steam locomotion be enjoyed, if not at Stockton, the birthplace of the passenger railway? This year, on Whit-Monday, the town was turned inside out. Nobody was at home but the letter-carrier and the town-pump. The iron horse ran off with the inhabitants in all directions—to Ripon and Studley Park—to Redcar and Kirkleatham—to Seaton and Hartlepool—to Durham, Sunderland, Newcastle, &c. Though the rail in truth, even while saving so much of our 'valuable time,' makes most of us occasionally grudge still more the loss of the smallest portion of that precious saving, which now often renders barely possible what heretofore was not to be seriously thought of at all, it is pleasant indeed to think that nevertheless it is thus begetting such a national disposition to expend a little of its own wondrous savings in healthful holiday recreation to the people at large, whose life of labour so much requires it, even for the sake of that labour and their power to sustain it with spirit and profit to all.——The Shropshire Union line of railways has been publicly opened. This line will now enable a passenger to take his seat at Euston station and reach Shrewsbury direct (160 miles), by express train, in five hours. The Union line is 30 miles long from Shrewsbury to Stafford. The total cost of it has been 500,000*l.* It is to be worked by the London and North-Western. ——Some of the leading Staffordshire iron-masters have had an interview with the North-

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